

**Commission on Aging
Public Policy Committee
May 11, 2023, 9:30 – 11:00 By Zoom
Minutes**

Commission Members Present: David Engel (note taker), Janice Zalen, Joyce Dubow, Ryan Wilson (Co-Chair), Barbara Selter, Wayne Berman

Staff Present: Pazit Aviv, Peter Flandrau

Meeting Commenced: 9:30 am

County Issues

Staff Report included news that Pazit Aviv will not be providing County staff support to the PPC and that Peter Flandrau will be the new staff support for the Commission and the PPC.

Recap commenced of the Councilmember visits & Budget talks. The Commission met with all 11 Councilmembers. Ten were through Zoom. David and Janice met with CM Laurie-Ann Sayles in person. It was noted that the Commission had good face to face time with the Council to present CoA priorities. It was discussed that an effort should be made to develop relationships the CM staff and Chiefs of Staff in order to keep the CoA top of mind for the Council. The Commission presentation to the Council was done by a recorded message and the written FY24 Budget Priority testimony was posted online.

A discussion about the CM bills for rent stabilization took place. Joyce asked how the County recordation tax increase impacted the rent stabilization bills. In response, Peter posted the detail of the recently voted on Bill 17-23, Taxation – Recordation Tax Rates – Amendments, to increase resources for Montgomery County Public Schools’ construction projects, Montgomery County capital projects and the creation and maintenance of affordable housing through the Housing Initiative Fund. <https://mocoshow.com/blog/county-council-raises-recordation-tax-rates-to-increase-resources-for-school-construction-montgomery-county-construction-projects-and-affordable-housing-new-rates-begin-october-1-2023/>

Wayne and Pazit discussed takeaways from the Affordable Housing Conference. There was a discussion about the resistance of developers to build multifamily housing when there are 40,000 units that have been issued permits. The County needs middle income housing. Pazit noted the <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/OCA/CommunityAction/Self-SufficiencyStandard.html> (self-sufficiency study) *The Self-Sufficiency Standard (SSS) defines how much income a family of a certain composition in a given place needs to adequately meet their basic needs – without public or private assistance. The SSS highlights the challenges faced by low-income residents and has proven to be a useful tool for service providers, researchers, policy-makers, and advocates. EXAMPLE: Self-Sufficiency*

**Wage in Montgomery County for a family of 2 adults, 2 school-age children
= \$111,536**

Kudos to Wayne and the AIC Committee on the successful Public Forum!

State Issues

A new Nursing Home Inspection/ Surveyor issue letter has been drafted by Janice and has been distributed to HHS to review and to provide comments. The final draft will go to the MD Sec. of Health and copies to the Mont. Co. Delegation, the County Council, the County Executive, MD Sec. of Aging. Pazit suggested distributing to the PIO and media outlets.

Ryan reviewed the current status of legislation and bill signing for this session of the GA. It was decided to follow into the next session bill on Death with Dignity. Ryan noted Vermont passed a bill to allow for non-residents to get assistance. Barbara commented that the CoA should follow up on HB318/SB604 bills that did not pass that provide a higher wage for Medicaid personal service care workers.

Peter discussed the Reduce the Wait Act implications for Mont. Co. The County is increasing AERS team: In response to the states' legislation passed to reduce the waitlist for the Community First Choice (CFC) and Community Options Waivers by 50%, the FY 24 CE recommended budget includes one FT Nurse manager and 5 nurses FT (total 6 FT positions) to address the increased assessment workload. Peter noted that as of 3/1/23, the State waitlist is 23,846 and that to reach the requirement to reduce the waitlist by half, the State will need to send out approximately 700 applications per month. They have now been increased from 300 to 400 per month. The AERS staff increases are to support the increases in application volume.

Other Business

The PPC discussed the status of new commissioners, the nomination process, and planning for the need to find a new co-chair for the PPC in the near future.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:00 am